

The Kollyvades: Keepers of the Faith. Dealing with the Issues:

How Often Should We Receive Holy
Communion and On What Days Are
Memorial Services Permitted



Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston

1476 Centre Street
Roslindale, Massachusetts 02131-1417
Tel: 617.323.6379 - Fax: 617.323.3861
Web Site: <http://www.homb.org>

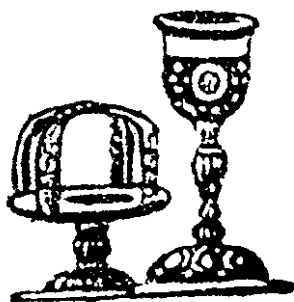
Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston

Copyright ©2009 by the Holy Orthodox Church in North America
Boston, Massachusetts 02131
All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America

the previous Thursday or Saturday. Likewise, there is no memorial service on the Saturdays of the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Weeks of Great Lent if those Saturdays should fall on February 24th, March 9th, March 24th, March 25th, or on the patronal feast of the parish church.”

**From the Life of Saint Macarius
of Corinth (✠ 1805)**

After the Saint came to the Holy Mountain, those who were performing memorial services on Sundays asked him if he approved of such services being held on that day; and the holy Macarios replied negatively. Then, when the former Patriarch of Alexandria Matthew died at the Monastery of Koutloumousiou, and the Saint was invited to officiate at the memorial service for the Patriarch forty days after his death, on a Sunday, he not only declined, but also wrote to the trustees of the deceased Patriarch the following: “Why do you prefer to hold the memorial service on a Sunday, and pass by the other days of the week, thus violating the rules and decrees of the Church, which forbid this? I myself have neither performed nor will ever perform a memorial service for the dead on a Sunday.”



The Kollyvades: keepers of the faith

Monasticism has always been the vanguard of the Orthodox Faith and the treasury of the Church’s sacred traditions. On many occasions, monastics have been persecuted and tortured because of their unshakable religious convictions and because of their struggles in behalf of Orthodoxy. The struggles monastics underwent during the iconoclast controversy in the eighth and ninth centuries are well known, as well as those that occurred during the Hesychastic disputes, during which Saint Gregory Palamas (†1359) proved to be a notable defender of the hesychasts. The monks of the Holy Mountain, Athos, especially, have made priceless contributions to Orthodoxy, and many of them proved to be holy men, such as the aforementioned Saint Gregory Palamas, the famous missionary preacher Saint Cosmas of Aitolia, Saints Macarius of Corinth, Athanasius of Paros, Arsenius of Paros, and others.

In the history of the Holy Mountain, Athonite monks have continually endeavored to deepen and strengthen the faith and spirit of the faithful in piety and the ancient traditions. They struggled to counteract spiritual laxity and the introduction of human traditions and innovations that have sometimes — especially in these latter times — insinuated themselves into various local Churches. Two such movements stand out in the last 600 years: that of the Hesychast Fathers in the 14th century, as mentioned above, and that of the Kollyvades, in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Kollyvades’ efforts were aimed at bringing about a renaissance of the liturgical and spiritual life on the basis of the Orthodox Church’s ancient and authentic tradition.

The Kollyvades movement began in the middle of the 18th century and lasted until the early years of the 19th century. What was this movement, which so preoccupied the Church, sometimes in a very grievous way? When and why did it manifest itself, and who were its leaders? Three remarkable individuals stand out as the lead-

ers of this movement, all of them major personalities in the history of Modern Greek religious life. These are Saint Macarius Notaras, later archbishop of Corinth, Saint Athanasius of Paros, the saintly and erudite teacher of the Modern Greek nation, and Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, the prolific author of religious works, including *The Rudder* (although a number of his writings show distinct influences of the period known as the Western captivity — an era of Protestant and Scholastic influence in the Orthodox East). These three had many notable disciples: James of the Peloponnesus, Agapius of Crete, Neophytus of Kavsokalyvia, Christopher Prodromites, Saint Arsenius of Paros, and many other clergymen, monastics, and laymen filled with the inspired teachings of their teachers.

The occasion for the appearance of the Kollyvades Movement took place in 1754 during the building of the main church, or the *kyriakon*, in the Athonite skete of Saint Anne. Many Orthodox faithful had sent contributions for the erection of the *kyriakon*, and the contributors had asked that the names of their reposed kinsmen and friends be commemorated at the special, full *pannychidas* celebrated in the Athonite monasteries. Such memorial services were traditionally held on Saturday morning. However, because of the multitude of the *pannychidas*, the authorities at Saint Anne's began to allow these services to be held on the other days of the week as well, except for Sunday. Finally, the senior fathers of the Skete decided to hold *pannychidas* on the Lord's Day also. This was an innovation. In the *Octoëchos* (or *Paracletiki*), the Saturdays are set aside for prayers for the departed, just as Mondays are dedicated to the angels, Tuesdays to Saint John the Baptist, Wednesdays and Fridays to the Precious Cross, Thursdays to the Apostles and Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, and Sunday, of course, to the Resurrection of Christ. The very hymns of the *Octoëchos* bear witness to this division of particular themes and Saints for each day of the week.

the practice of communicating on Sunday was the rule (see chapters 86, 106 and 161)

Besides Sunday, Christians, made an effort to receive the Holy Gifts also on days dedicated to the holy martyrs and on Pentecost. In the Church of Cappadocia, at the time of Saint Basil the Great, Christians communicated four times a week: Sunday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday (*Letter to Caesarea*, 89). From the 49th canon of the Council of Laodicea it is obvious that the faithful during Great Lent received the Holy Mysteries twice a week, and even more often at other times. Another time when ancient Christians received Holy Communion frequently was during the entire Paschal week [when no fasting is permitted!], thus spiritually celebrating the Resurrection of Christ. Throughout this week, as may be seen from the 66th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, the faithful communicated every day. Saint John Chrysostom (*Homily 5 on the 1st Epistle to Timothy*) and Saint Ambrose (*On the Sacraments*) complain about those who communicate once in a year. One may approach the Holy Eucharist unworthily even once a year, according to Chrysostom.

Days on Which Memorial Services Are Not Permitted

In Article 169 of the *Nomocanon* found in the *Great Euchologion* (*Book of Needs*), we read: “During the twelve days of Christmas, the first week of the Great Fast, Great [Holy] Week, Renewal [Bright] Week, Sunday, the Great Feasts [of the Saviour and of the Mother of God],* and on the patronal feast of the parish church, there is no memorial service (*mnemósynon ou gínetai*). If the patronal feast of the parish church, or the feast of the Meeting in the Temple [February 2nd], should fall on Meat-fare Saturday, or if the patronal feast of the parish church should fall on the Saturday before Pentecost, there is no memorial service. Rather, the memorial service is transferred to

* In some usages, the term “Great Feasts” is understood to include the entire period up to and including the *Apodosis* (i.e. giving-up) of the feast in question.

(*Third Homily on the Epistle to the Ephesians*). “And in the same way that we dishonor a feast to which we have been invited if we sit at the table and take no part in it, so if we are present at the Liturgy we dishonor the Divine Table by withdrawing from it” (*Ibid.*). It is clear that, in the time of Saint John Chrysostom, all the faithful present at the Liturgy would receive Communion every time. Augustine (✠430) (*Letter 118: Sermon 26 on the Gospel of John*), Jerome (✠420) (*Letter 50 to Pammacheus*) and Saint Ambrose (✠397) all speak about daily Communion. Saint Ambrose writes: “Receive [Holy Communion] every day, for that is useful for you every day. Live in such a way that you will always be worthy of receiving it.” Saint Basil the Great (✠379) says: “Be present every day and receive the Holy Body and Blood of Christ because it is good and useful” (*Letter to Caesarea*). Saint Nilus of Sinai (✠450) gives similar counsel: “Abstain from all the things of corruption and every day communicate in the Mystical Supper; in such a way our body becomes a part of the Body of Christ” (*Works of Nilus of Sinai, Part 2*). According to all the canons, those under *epitimion* were excluded from Communion, so it may be concluded that all the rest of the faithful in ancient times went to Communion (11th and 13th canons of the Council of Nicea). As far as the celebrants of the Mystery of the Eucharist are concerned, they especially had to communicate without exception under penalty of expulsion from the Church. Only the presentation of a good reason served as an excuse for not communicating (Canons of the Holy Apostles 8 and 9).

In Saint Justin the Philosopher (✠167) we read that the special day when all the faithful gathered for Communion was Resurrection day, or as Saint Justin called it, “the day of the sun” (*Apology I*). Weekly Communion on Sunday was the standard practice. Sunday itself was given the name “Bread day,” because on this day, as Saint John Chrysostom explains, in the whole Christian world the “breaking of Bread” took place (*Discourse 5, On Sunday*). From the *Spiritual Meadow* of Saint John Moschus (✠622) it may be seen that

Since this innovation was at variance with the Church’s ancient practice, some monks did not consent to the new practice, for, said they, Sunday is the day of the resurrection and of joy, and is not appropriate for memorial services. These fathers were rightly scandalized by the innovation and reasoned that it is “unlawful to celebrate a memorial service on Sunday”; therefore, when such services began, they would depart from the church.

This occasioned a controversy among the Athonites: some maintaining that “Sunday is to be preferred, since the reposed departed in the hope of the resurrection, and the Saviour’s own Resurrection took place on Sunday,” and consequently, according to their interpretation, the celebration of Sunday memorial services did not contravene the joyful character of the Lord’s Day; but others maintained that they would not accept such a violation of the Church’s order; furthermore — they pointed out — on the day of Saturday, our Saviour Christ rested in the grave and harrowed Hades, whereas His joyous Resurrection occurred on Sunday. Those who disagreed with the fathers who upheld the traditional usage began to refer to them disparagingly as *Kollyvades*, or *Kollyvistae* (after the sweetened wheat dish that is served after commemorations of the dead) or Sabbatians (after the word *Sabbaton* — Saturday). However, though the disdainful term *Kollyvades* initially contributed to the traditionalists being persecuted, cursed, and reviled — to the scandal of many monastics and Orthodox people — it later became a badge of honor.

As the controversy spread, it endangered the peace of the whole Holy Mountain. As Sergius Makraios, a church historian and instructor at the Patriarchial School of the Nation in Constantinople, wrote, “The debate spread to every hermitage and disturbed all therein . . . even the more erudite differed among themselves; some retaliated with sophistical arguments, and delved into the Scriptures, and became mired in an abyss of irrationalities; and

thorns of calumnies sprang up, together with a plethora of tares, and it became a hornet's nest of evils."

In 1772, an appeal was made to Ecumenical Patriarch Theodosius II to solve the matter. Together with Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem, he responded: "They that celebrate the memorial services for the departed on Saturday do well, in that they observe the Church's ancient tradition; but they that perform [these services] on Sunday are not subject to judgment." This ambiguous response, obviously, did not end the dispute. As a result, Ecumenical Patriarch Samuel (Hantzaris) — the successor of the aforementioned Theodosius — issued a synodal letter in 1773, in which he decreed that "they who live in asceticism in the cells and sketes, and are under the direction and in obedience to their sacred monasteries, must follow unwaveringly the order and custom observed in the monasteries in regard to memorial services; that is, these services must be celebrated on Saturday."

But the controversy persisted, and two further councils were convoked to deal with the matter. The first convened in 1774 in the Monastery of Koutloumousiou by order of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. At this council, two former patriarchs (Cyril V of Constantinople and Matthew of Alexandria) participated, together with four former Metropolitans, two acting Metropolitans, two bishops from Thessalonica and some 200 monks. The council placed under anathema those who would not accept the Patriarchate's decisions. The second council convened in 1776 in Constantinople at the Ecumenical Patriarchate under Sophronius II, with the participation of Patriarch Abraamius of Jerusalem and 16 hierarchs. This council excommunicated the leaders of the Kollyvades! — namely, Athanasius of Paros, James of the Peloponnesus, Agapius of Crete, Neophytus of Kavsokalyvia, Christopher Prodromites, and Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain. Later they were absolved, especially Saint Athanasius of Paros, who appealed this decision in 1781.

The Testimony from Ancient Sources

Here it would be instructive for us to turn also to sources from the earliest years of the Orthodox Christian Church. They have much to teach us about the Church's teaching and practice regarding the reception of Holy Communion in those times. Those who had been baptized were not only permitted to go to Communion, but were obliged to receive, or be liable to severe spiritual *epitimia*. So, in the *Apostolic Constitution* (Canon 9) it says: "All those faithful who enter and listen to the Scriptures but do not stay for prayer and Holy Communion must be excommunicated, on the ground that they are causing the Church a breach of order." Tertullian (✠220) writes: "Many think that in the days of Lent [i.e. when the Christians are keeping a strict fast], it is not right to attend the Liturgy, thinking that, because of the fast, they should not partake of the Body of the Lord frequently [!!]. . . . But you take the Body of the Lord and come to Him during that time; then, for you and for others, it will serve as a correction: having taken part in the offering of the sacrifice, you will have fulfilled your duty" (*De oratione*, cap. vi). From the words of Tertullian it is clear that, in his time, those present at the Eucharist received Communion every time. Saint Cyprian (✠258), in explaining the words "Give us this day our daily bread," understands the word "bread" as, above all, meaning the Bread of the Eucharist. "And we ask," he says, "that this Bread will be given to us every day, we pray, in this way, that we, existing in Christ and every day receiving in the Eucharist the food of salvation, will not fall into any serious sin, for which we must be subjected to exclusion and lose association with this Heavenly Bread and so be separated from the Body of Christ" (*On the Lord's Prayer*).

Saint John Chrysostom (✠407) says: "Whoever does not communicate, though present at the Liturgy, shows that he belongs in the ranks of those who are under an *epitimon*, because not being allowed to communicate is the essence of being under an *epitimon*"

fulness with regard to his movements; to indulge freely in food, speech and improper sights and sounds, and to become like an unbridled irrational animal, which runs toward every precipice. . . . How can one kindle in one's heart divine love, spiritual joy, divine peace, and the rest of the fruits of the Holy Spirit without partaking of the Body and Blood of the beloved Son of the Father. . . ?



Some persons say: "Look, we fulfill the commandments of the Lord, for we commune two or three times a year, and this is enough to justify us."

We reply that this is good and beneficial, but to commune more often is much better. For the more one approaches light, the more one is illuminated; and the more one approaches fire, the more one is warmed; the more one approaches holiness, the more one is sanctified; similarly, the more one approaches God through Communion, the more one is enlightened, warmed, and sanctified. My brother, if you are worthy to commune two or three times a year, you are worthy to commune more often, as the divine Chrysostom says, provided you keep the same preparation and worthiness. What then, hinders us from communing more often? Our negligence, our indolence — by which we are overcome and do not prepare ourselves as much as possible for Communion. Amen.

—From *Saint Macarios of Corinth* by Constantine Cavarnos (Belmont, MA, 1977).

For further reading on the Kollyvades see Dr. Cavarnos' titles:

Saint Arsenios of Paros, Modern Orthodox Saints, Vol. 6, 1978; *Saint Macarios of Corinth*, Modern Orthodox Saints, Vol. 2, 1977; *Saint Nicodemos the Hagiorite*, Modern Orthodox Saints, Vol. 3, 1974; *Saint Nikephoros of Chios*, Modern Orthodox Saints, Vol. 4, 1976. These studies were published by the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, Belmont, MA.

The controversy continued into the nineteenth century and spread to Constantinople, where it divided the Phanariote aristocracy into two warring factions. In 1819, Ecumenical Patriarch Gregory V, later martyred by the Turks, issued an encyclical allowing memorial services "on all days of the week." In this particular decision, the holy Patriarch simply sought to quell the dispute, but he failed to examine and address the Church's long-standing tradition.

The matter pertaining to the memorial services, then, was the first point of contention between the Kollyvades and their foes. It lasted for some 65 years, and it acutely divided and preoccupied the Church's faithful. The Kollyvades, who were extremely well versed in theology, philosophy, and other fields of learning, also sought to restore other revered traditions of the ancient Church, which modern local customs — human traditions — had obscured or even abolished. They were also defenders of the frequent reception of Holy Communion, according to the ancient practice of the Church, and because of this they were fiercely attacked: The above-mentioned Ecumenical Patriarch Theodosius II, in his letters to the Athonite fathers on the matter regarding memorial services, likewise attempted to reconcile the issue of frequent reception of Holy Communion, pointing out that the early Christians partook of the Holy Mysteries every Sunday. And he observed:

"Regarding whether one should approach to receive the immaculate Mysteries more often or not, we respond that no time has been determined [as regards frequency], but it is by all means necessary that one prepare by holy repentance and confession. When the preaching of the Faith began, the Christians partook of the divine Mysteries every Sunday; but after this, others partook every forty days, preparing themselves by repentance, and thus they approached [the Holy Chalice]. Wherefore, let each one, if he be worthy, place himself among the first, or, if not, among the second; for this too is blessed. . . . As the divine Apostle says, "Let each man test himself, and thus let him eat of the Bread and drink of the Cup."

This patriarchal letter resulted in the opponents of frequent communion ignoring the first part of the letter, while observing the second, and therefore receiving the Holy Mysteries only every 40 days.

Nonetheless, as in the instance of the memorial services, the dispute continued. Again, the future martyr Ecumenical Patriarch Gregory V, issued an encyclical emphasizing that “the pious have an obligation to approach the Holy Cup at every Divine Liturgy and to partake of the life-creating Body. This indeed is why they are invited by the priest with the words: ‘With the fear of God, faith and love draw near.’” The Patriarch sharply rebuked the foes of the Kollyvades: “All who are incited by haughtiness and arrogance and declare that the forty-day period of waiting before receiving the immaculate and supremely pure Body and Blood of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, is a dogma and decree of the Church” are warned that, if they do not obey the Church, they will be subjected “to Her righteous indignation and punishment.” Thus, this saintly Patriarch demonstrated clearly that one may approach to partake of the Divine Eucharist without observing any specified period of waiting. Indeed, it is not a matter of “worthiness” — for all are unworthy; that is why confession and repentance are required before receiving Holy Communion. Nor is it a matter of fasting from specific foods, for this rule is nowhere mentioned in the holy canons and regulations of the Church. In fact, Holy Tradition teaches us that we must partake of the Holy Mysteries even when fasting is forbidden, for example, during Bright Week, as we see in Canon 66 of the Quinisext Council. Unless one is under a specific *epitimion*, failure to approach the Holy Cup is considered by the Church to be disdain for the Lord’s banquet: here the Lord Himself is inviting us to partake of His Body and Blood, and we refuse and make excuses, like those mentioned in the Gospel (Luke 14:15–24). Indeed, the reason we partake of the Body and Blood of our Saviour often is precisely because it is “unto remission of sins and life everlasting.”

when he communes, and after he has communed. Before he communes he must make the necessary preparation, that is, he must confess to his spiritual father, correct himself, feel compunction, acquire inner attention, guard himself from passionate thoughts as far as possible, and also from every other vice. Similarly, he must exercise self-restraint, pray, be inwardly awake, become more devout, and do every other kind of good deed, reflecting on how awesome is the King he is about to receive within himself; especially if he considers that the grace which is given to him from Communion is proportionate to his preparation. It is evident that the more one makes such preparation, the more benefit he receives.



After one has communed, reflecting on what dreadful heavenly Mysteries he has received, he watches lest he dishonor the grace. He is cautious, circumspect, guards his thoughts, begins a stricter and more virtuous life, and abstains as far as he can from every evil. And when he reflects that after a few days he will commune again, he doubles his attention, adds readiness to readiness, self-restraint to self-restraint, vigil to vigil, effort to effort, and he struggles to the highest degree possible. He is incited on the one hand by the fact that he has communed only a short time ago, and on the other by his anticipation of the Communion he will receive only a short time hence.



Infrequent Communion produces in Christians the opposites of all these. For whoever delays in communing makes no preparation, does not become careful, does not guard himself so diligently against evil thoughts. His delay causes him to fall into negligence, and the warmth of his devoutness begins to cool. The length of time gives him the license to walk with laxity and indifference in his life, and to have no fear in his soul, no restraint in his senses and no watch-

St. Macarius of Corinth on Continual Communion

Holy Communion illumines, brightens, and sanctifies all the powers and senses of man's soul and body, and strengthens the soul in doing the Lord's commandments and every other virtuous act. It is the true food of the soul and of the body, as our Lord says: "My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (John 6:55).



All Orthodox Christians are commanded to receive Holy Communion frequently: firstly, by the injunction of our Lord Jesus Christ; secondly, by the acts and Canons of the holy Apostles and the holy Synods, and the statements of individual divine Fathers; thirdly, by the very words, order, and ritual of the sacred Liturgy; and fourthly, by Holy Communion itself.



Just as breathing is necessary for life, and just as food is necessary for the sustenance of the body, so is frequent Communion necessary for the life of the soul and for the sustenance of its substance, or rather it is incomparably more necessary.



Before partaking of Holy Communion, it is necessary that we cleanse ourselves of every defilement, especially malice, by means of confession. For just as love is the fullness and completion of the whole Law, so malice and hatred are the annulment and violation of the whole Law and of every virtue.



The Christian receives great benefit from the Divine Mysteries, both in his soul and in his body, before he communes, at the time

In the year 1777 Saint Macarius Notaras of Corinth published in Venice *A Handbook by An Anonymous Author, Demonstrating That Christians Should Partake of the Divine Mysteries More Often*. In this work (readers will understand shortly why the Saint kept his authorship anonymous) the Saint demonstrated by numerous passages from the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Fathers that frequent communion was the practice of the early Church. Six years later, Saint Nicodemus expanded this work, adding new chapters of his own, changed the title to *On Continual Communion*, and published it, once more anonymously. The book provoked a storm of protests and calumnies, and was condemned by Ecumenical Patriarch Procopius! Later, however, the condemnation was lifted and the work was recognized as Orthodox by Ecumenical Patriarch Neophytus VII.

Following the abridged *Church History* by Stephen Kommetas (second edition, Zakynthos, 1861), G. Berites writes that "a noteworthy and likewise praiseworthy 'innovation' of the Kollyvades — which reminds one of the Apostolic period — was their initiating the practice of reciting aloud the secret prayers of the Liturgy, so that the people could hear them and see the Holy Mysteries celebrated in the sight of all the faithful; at the end, all were invited to partake, if, of course, they had prepared themselves by holy confession and repentance. Also, they preferred to celebrate the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts in the evening, according to the ancient tradition, during Vespers, and not in the morning."

In any case, the matters of the memorial services and the frequent reception of Holy Communion sufficed to provoke a major campaign against the Kollyvades on the part of their antagonists. Despite the fact that the Kollyvades' teachings were supported and justified by countless patristic texts and writings of the Saints, their fanaticized enemies were not satisfied and the Kollyvades were mercilessly persecuted and driven from the Holy Mountain. Saint Athanasius of Paros was initially condemned by the Ecumenical

Patriarchate, without even being given the opportunity to defend himself. Later his condemnation was retracted, but he did not return to the Holy Mountain; he reposed at the Monastery of Saint George on the island of Chios. In a similar manner, Saints Macarius Notaras and Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain were vilely slandered “out of malice and altogether falsely,” as Gerasimus Smyrnakis writes, and the slanders often reached ludicrous proportions. The Kollyvades’ disciples were also cruelly persecuted and, according to Stephen Kommetas, “the persecutors sometimes drowned the persecuted disciples in the sea, and exiled others from the monasteries!”

Hence, many of these godly men were obliged to forsake their beloved sketes and hermitages where they had passed a whole life of spiritual struggles, and they were dispersed throughout Greece. This persecution, however, had a happy result, if only because, as a result of the above-mentioned atrocities, these pious and enlightened men spread their regenerating teaching to the people. In many cities of Greece and on the Aegean islands, monasteries and convents sprang up, and the religious fervor of the faithful was revitalized. Through their preaching, their learning and their exemplary and austere ascetical life, the Kollyvades won the respect of the people and many became their followers.

One of the islands to which the Kollyvades fled was Skiathos, the homeland of modern Greece’s greatest literary figures, Alexander Papadiamantis and Alexander Moraitides. These two authors received the Kollyvades’ spirit and their love for the Church’s traditions from their uncle, the Elder Dionysius the Most Learned. The Elder Dionysius’ learning was complete: he knew all the writings of the Ancient Greeks and of the Church Fathers, he was a true ascetic, he had great teaching abilities, he knew medical science and healed the sick, he was an almsgiver and philanthropist. His personality made a profound and lasting impression on his two nephews, who were also his spiritual children.

The persecution and exile of the Kollyvades from the Holy Mountain, did, however, also have a very lamentable result. The great majority of the fathers who remained on the Holy Mountain were, and remain to this very day, anti-Kollyvades in their practices and sentiments. Thus, when the calendar change came in 1924, many of these Athonite priestmonks (the “zealots”) who came to the aid of the faithful in Greece, who were being persecuted by the new calendar State Church of Greece, were themselves heirs of the anti-Kollyvades views of their own spiritual fathers on Athos and hence imparted these views to the faithful.

Yet on the Holy Mountain, small pockets of Kollyvades remained scattered here and there. One of these small brotherhoods was that of the saintly Elder Joseph the Cave-dweller (†1959). Because he persisted in upholding the Kollyvades’ precepts, he and those with him were looked down upon by most of the Athonite fathers and are to this day considered to be in spiritual delusion (*en plani*, in Greek; *v prelesti*, in Russian). Because of this opposition, the Elder Joseph and his synodia found it necessary to avoid making an issue of the Kollyvades’ precepts (unless challenged).

Our own Synod’s monastic communities in North America, inspired by the teachings of the holy Elder Joseph the Cave-dweller and of the Kollyvades and their love and reverence for the Church’s Holy Tradition, strive to inspire our parishes with these same teachings.

Such were the Kollyvades and their wondrous accomplishments!
Glory be to God for all things!

